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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 003575

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SUBJECT: TURKISH FM GUL, U/S TUYGAN ON BAKOYANNIS MEETING,
CYPRUS, IRAN/IRAQ, BILATERAL RELATIONS

REF: ANKARA 3542

(U) Classified by Ambassador Ross Wilson, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: In June 15 meetings with Ambassador, Turkish FM Gul and MFA U/S Tuygan provided more details about Gul's June 10 meeting with Greek FM Bakoyannis (reftel). On Cyprus, Gul expressed interest in working to solve Turkey's ports issue with the EU, adding that details and public rhetoric surrounding any arrangement would be critical. Gul said he sees signs of flexibility from Iran. On Iraq, Gul said FM Zebari will visit Turkey July 3, and he had in principle agreed to visit Baghdad. Gul and emphasized the importance of his upcoming July meeting with the Secretary. End Summary.

More Details on Gul/Bakoyannis Meeting

¶2. (C) Tuygan said Gul was caught off guard by Bakoyannis' "superior" tone and her litany of Greek complaints about Turkey in her remarks at the Turkish-Greek Media Conference both attended. In his speech, Gul stuck with his prepared remarks, which were designed to be positive. Notwithstanding this, in every other respect, Tuygan felt the Greek side went out of its way to create positive atmospheris, including in the way Bakoyannis interactedwith Gul.

¶3. (C) In their private meeting, akoyannis went over at length (excessive length, Tuygan thought) Greek complaints, including especially on the Halki Seminary and the Patriarchate. Gul replied that Turkey wanted to work constructively on these issues but there are legal constraints and domestic political resistance. Gul raised the status of Muslims in western Thrace; Bakoyannis cited Greek legal complications in addressing the issues.

¶4. (C) Gul warned Bakoyannis that continuing GOG allegations of Turkish "genocide" of Pontic Greeks could create barriers in Greek public opinion to improved bilateral relations. He noted that although relations with Turkey and related problems loom large in the Greek media, relations with Greece are just one of many problems for Turkey, and not among the most immediate or important. He reportedly told Bakoyannis

that 73 percent of Turks have a positive view of Greece, and 51 percent regard Greece as Turkey's biggest supporter in the EU accession process -- more than any other country.

¶ 15. (C) The meeting concluded on a positive note, with Bakoyannis telling Gul that Greece will continue to try to help on Turkey's EU accession, including on Cyprus-related EU issues. Tuygan said Turkey is pleased with the confidence building measures announced during the meeting, but feels the time has come for the two countries to address the underlying issues in the Aegean.

¶ 16. (C) Gul emphasized to Ambassador his interest in building strong, peaceful relations with Greece. His assessment was that Bakoyannis is working to deflect domestic perceptions that she is too close to Turkey and is playing to domestic populist sentiment with her long-term political ambitions in mind. He said Bakoyannis had invited him to Greece and he wanted to go soon. Both he and Bakoyannis asked their under secretaries to be more frequently in touch and report back to

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them jointly on the results when they next meet.

Cyprus

¶ 17. (C) Gul said Cyprus did not come up in his meeting with Bakoyannis, except in passing, in the EU context. With the Ambassador, he echoed public remarks in Luxembourg complaining about EU members' unwillingness to stand up to Cyprus. Gul said he could understand Cypriot intransigence, but strongly objected to what he views as EU member states accepting it.

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¶ 18. (C) Ambassador reiterated U.S. interest and willingness to work with all parties on ideas about how to prevent the ports and trade issues between Turkey and Cyprus from hindering Turkey's EU accession. Ambassador noted that the European Commission and others have been thinking about the possibility of a simple, temporary arrangement. Gul expressed interest, but said the domestic politics here are getting harder. He also made it clear that the details of any such arrangement would be critical, as would the public rhetoric surrounding it.

Iran, Iraq

¶ 19. (C) On Iran, Gul assessed that the U.S. and Turkey are working together well and constructively. Gul said he sees signs of Iranian flexibility. Reflecting off Ambassador's discussion with U/S Tuygan a day before on possible travel to Tehran, Gul said he had discussed all the Iran issues with Secretary Rice earlier in the day.

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¶ 110. (C) Gul briefly discussed Iraq and the need to support the new GOI. He said that Iraqi FM Zebari would visit Ankara for a series of meetings on July 3. Gul added that he had been invited to Baghdad and had agreed in principle to go. Gul emphasized the importance of re-starting trilateral U.S./Turkish/Iraqi talks on the PKK.

Bilateral Relations

¶ 111. (C) Gul said he looks forward to meeting with the Secretary on July 5. This meeting will be his number one

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priority during his trip to the U.S. He recognized July 4 is a major U.S. holiday and some U.S. officials with whom he

would like to meet may be unavailable. If they are available, Gul thought meetings with Secretary Rumsfeld and NSA Hadley would be helpful. Tuygan said instructions about the shared vision and structured dialogue paper had been sent to the Turkish Embassy in Washington, but declined to discuss the matter further; he hoped the launch could happen during Gul's visit.

Visit Ankara's Classified Web Site at
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

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